

THE JACOB JOURNAL

A NEWSLETTER FROM SUPERVISOR DIANNE JACOB

SEPTEMBER 1997

Rewarding Top County Employees

Since joining the Board of Supervisors, I have been a strong and vocal advocate for running the County more like a business — that means implementing performance incentives for County employees. Unfortunately for over sixty years, County employees have been insulated from the private sector world of performance standards due to an outdated, antiquated system. The vast majority of County employees are very good at what they do and take initiative to do their job the best they can. In many cases, exemplary employees are constrained by a system that rewards non-performing co-workers and extinguishes any flicker of creativity and incentive to achieve cost savings.

I don't blame a County employee who only does enough at their job to just get by. Why not? If you work harder than everyone else you don't earn more money or receive extra time-off. In fact, there is no guarantee that one of those non-performers you work with won't get promoted quicker than you, simply based on seniority. Unfortunately, the current system takes the wind right out of the sails of energetic and innovative County employees because there's no extra reward for top-notch performance.

Instead of using the successful business model of rewarding top performers, the system treats employees the same regardless of their performance. For example, the current system provides what's called "across-the-board" pay increases whether employees are doing a good job or not. And incidentally, since 1990, these across-the-board increases have cost taxpayers more than \$100 million dollars!

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County government is a \$2.2 billion business. To operate the County more like a business means to change the culture to make it efficient, cost effective and accountable to the taxpayers — the people who pay the bills! And, it is our business to assure top quality services to our customers — the 2.7 million people in the San Diego region.

Further, the Board of Supervisors has the fiduciary responsibility to assure that the best County services are provided at the least cost. If talent and initiative are not recognized and rewarded, government will NOT be able to meet the needs or expectations of the people we serve.

"I will continue to push for pay-for-performance for every County employee."

-Dianne Jacob

Because the success of any organization is directly related to the quality of people it employs, it is essential to establish a plan to reward exceptional work.

That's why on April 15, 1997, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted pay-for-performance, officially called the "Operational Incentive Plan" which affects 269 County managers and department directors. This "Plan" not only rewards exceptional work through rewarding bonuses but can also reduce base salaries.

On August 18, 1997, the County's Chief Administrative Officer, Lawrence Prior, III, announced the performance based pay adjustments. He stated that those receiving a bonus have demonstrated their ability to improve the performance of their department or unit. Mr. Prior also stated that an executive's dedication to improve customer service for all County citizens who access their departments is of equal importance. Out of the 269 managers eligible to receive a bonus, 179 performed at a level to deserve one, over one third of the managers received no bonus, and 13 County managers were actually given a reduction in their annual base salary.

PERFORMANCE, continued on page three

*Supervisor Dianne Jacob
proudly serves the
communities of:*

Agua Caliente Springs
Allied Gardens
Alpine
Barrett
Blossom Valley
Bostonia
Boulevard
Campo
Casa de Oro
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Pine Valley
Potrero
Poway
Ramona
Rancho San Diego
Rolando
Santa Ysabel
Santee
Shelter Valley
Spring Valley
Tecate
Tierra del Sol
Vallecitos

New WWWWebsite A Site To See Jacob Site Offers Direct Link

Supervisor Dianne Jacob this month kicked off a new and improved site on the World Wide Web. The site boasts an easy-to-use format and lots of information about Jacob's activities at the County.

Among the topics covered are:

My Staff & I — Supervisor Jacob's biography is on this page, as well as those of her staff. Check it out if you want to know more!

Press Box — A quick look at public communications issued by Supervisor Jacob, including her commentaries, speeches, and news releases.

Legislation — Divided into four general categories, this is a great way to find out what legislation Supervisor Jacob is pushing. From public safety services and health / human services, to land-use / environment and general government; this page is a wealth of information!

Sites To See — Want to know more? Check out these hot links...they include business, education, government and entertainment / tourism links. If it relates to East County, it's here!

The 2nd District — Still under construction, this interactive map will soon boast pictures of East County locations and information about the great places in the Second District.

The Jacob Journal — If this copy isn't enough, you can download another copy of The Jacob Journal. You can also look at back-issues.

How To Reach Me — Use this page if you are not sure of the address, phone number or fax number. Or just click on the e-mail address and send your comments directly!

So, the next time you are "surfing the net" or cruising on the information superhighway, be sure to stop by and visit at:

www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/bos/sup2

The site is constantly being updated, so your suggestions are welcome. Let us know what you think!

PERFORMANCE, *continued from page one*

Commenting on those who received a reduction in their pay, Carlos Arauz, County Director of Human Resources, stated, "This is a wake-up call for those individuals to re-assess their performance on the job, to resolve to improve in the future and to fully understand what the goals and objectives of the County really are and that it is time to re-energize and perform in an exceptional manner."

This new pay-for-performance plan represents a one-time net cost of \$600,000 but should actually save \$2.5 million over five years when compared to an annual 3% across-the-board salary increase over five years. And that's just straight salary savings!

The new pay-for-performance plan also allowed the Chief Administrative Officer to help the Board of Supervisors craft a budget with \$18 million in reserves — the highest management and contingency reserve ever in the history of this County — and \$13 million in savings from the restructuring of long term debt. All told, this investment of \$600,000 saves more than \$31 million! That's a good deal any day — not only is it good fiscal policy, but it rewards exemplary employees. And the payback is huge, both in higher quality services and savings to taxpayers. These are the results of the "Operational Incentive Plan" which includes bonuses up to 30% of base pay.

My only regret with the pay-for-performance plan is that not all 18,000 County employees were eligible to participate in this program. After all, the success of the managers is directly related to the exemplary employees working as a part of the successful department or unit team.

Unfortunately, public employee unions have in the past been resistant to this kind of change in government — rewarding exceptional County employees through a pay-for-performance plan. However, I am hopeful that in the future there will be a new spirit of cooperation to implement this incentive plan so all of the 18,000 County employees who rightly deserve bonuses for exemplary work receive them.

I firmly believe in fairness. Well, what about fairness to hard-working employees who deserve to be rewarded? It's time to stop making excuses about why government cannot operate as efficiently and effectively as a successful private business. We can! And, that's why I will continue to push for pay-for-performance for **every** County employee.

It's in the best interest of the employee, our customers and the taxpayers!

COUNTY ROUND-UP

**Legislative Proposals From
Supervisor Dianne Jacob**

*Jacob Calls On Governor
To Negotiate With
Indian Tribes*

On August 20, 1997, Supervisor Jacob stood shoulder-to-shoulder, government-to-government with tribal leaders from Barona, Sycuan, and Viejas to call on the Governor to negotiate a gaming compact. The tribes are a major contributor to East County's economic base, employing more than 4000 people, generating \$77 million in payroll, and purchasing more than \$100 million in goods and services from San Diego businesses.

*Jacob & Slater Initiate
Summit on Aging*

By the year 2010, the population over 60 years old in San Diego County is expected to increase nearly 70%. To assure that the County is in the best possible position to continue to serve this population, Supervisors Jacob and Slater will ask that a Summit on Aging be convened. More details will be available soon. If you are interested in participating, please call (619) 531-5522, and we'll add you to the mailing list.

Get The Jacob Journal!

The Jacob Journal will be mailed to you on a regular basis by request only. So, if you like what you've read, fill out the form below and mail it back to us at 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101 or fax it to us at (619) 696-7253. We'll put you on our mailing list to get The Jacob Journal regularly!

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We hope to hear from you soon!

September 97

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